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E.O. 11652:XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 530 - MARCH 28, 1978

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING
PARIS FOR NICHOLAS MURPHY
OTHER ADDRESSEES FOR CHIEFS MISSION

1. LEBANON. DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS OF UNIFIL'S ROLE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON ARE LIKELY TO CREATE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES. WHILE THE PALESTINIANS, THE ISRAELIS, AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE SOUTHERN LEBANESE CHRISTIANS HAVE AGREED THAT UNIFIL CAN BE STATIONED IN THE SOUTH, THEY DIFFER WIDELY ON THE LOCATION AND FUNCTION OF THE UN FORCES.

2. WHILE THE PALESTINIANS SO FAR HAVE ASSISTED THE FRENCH FORCES IN MOVING FROM BEIRUT TO THE TYRE AREA, THEY HAVE NOT ALLOWED UN FORCES TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE QASIMIYA BRIDGE BETWEEN TYRE AND SIDON, OR THE SWEDISH CONTINGENT TO CONTROL THE KHANDALI BRIDGE BETWEEN MARJAYOUN AND NABATIYA. - --

3. THE PALESTINIANS BELIEVE THAT THE FUNCTION OF THE UN FORCES IS TO FORCE THE IDF TO WITHDRAW AND TO FILL THE VACUUM LEFT BY ITS DEPARTURE. YESTERDAY, THE PALESTINIANS HARASSED THE FRENCH PARATROOPERS AS THEY ESTABLISHED THEIR FIRST TWO POSITIONS ALONG THE TYRE SALIENT. FINALLY, AFTER A VERY NARROW BUFFER ZONE WAS DELINEATED BETWEEN THE ISRAELIS AND THE PALESTINIANS, THE FRENCH WERE ALLOWED TO ESTABLISH THEIR POSITIONS. ONE PALESTINIAN
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COMMENTED THAT IF THE FRENCH INSISTED ON DEPLOYING ON "OUR SIDE," THEY WILL BE EFFECTING A SECOND OCCUPATION OF LEBANON.

4. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PALESTINIANS ARE GENERALLY DIS-TRUSTFUL OF THE UN. MANY BELIEVE THE UN FORCES ARE BEING DEPLOYED TO RESTRICT PALESTINIAN ATTACKS ON ISRAEL. OTHERS AGREE WITH ONE GUERRILLA WHO RECENTLY STATED "WE DON'T TRUST THE UN, FOR IT HAS BEEN DECEIVING US SINCE 1948, WITH ONE RESOLUTION AFTER THE OTHER THAT ISRAEL NEVER RESPECTED. WHY DO PEOPLE EXPECT US TO OBSERVE UN DECISIONS WHEN ISRAEL DOES NOT?"

5. FOR THE ISRAELIS, THE ROLE OF THE UN IS TO OCCUPY SOUTHERN LEBANON AND TO FORM A SECURITY BELT FOR NORTHERN ISRAEL. HOWEVER, THEY DO NOT VIEW THE DEPLOYMENT OF UNIFIL IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AS THE SOLUTION TO THE "SOUTH LEBANON" PROBLEM THEY ENVISIONED WHEN THEY MOVED INTO THE AREA ON MARCH 15. THE ISRAELIS DO NOT REGARD THE UN AS FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD THEM. THIS PERCEPTION IS BASED ON MORE THAN 20 YEARS OF RELATIONS WITH UNMO'S WHO HAVE APPEARED TO THE ISRAELIS AS AT TIMES TOO SYMPATHETIC

TO THE PLO.

6. THE ISRAELIS APPEAR TO BE PRESSING UNIFIL TO OCCUPY THOSE AREAS OF SOUTHERN LEBANON WHICH THE IDF DOES NOT HOLD. FROM THE BEGINNING, ISRAELI OFFICIALS STRESSED THAT UNIFIL SHOULD OCCUPY TYRE, THE THREE LITANI BRIDGES, AND BEAUFORT CASTLE. SOME OFFICIALS HAVE STATED THAT HASBAYYA AND NABATIYA -- AREAS WHICH THE IDF DID NOT TAKE FOR POLITICAL OR TACTICAL REASONS -- ALSO SHOULD BE CONTROLLED BY THE UN. THE IDF REALIZES THAT, WITHOUT EFFECTIVE UN CONTROL OF THESE LOCATIONS, THE PALESTINIANS WILL BE ABLE TO ROCKET AND SHELL NORTHERN ISRAEL.

7. THE PROSPECT THAT THE PALESTINIANS MAY BE ABLE TO
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STRIKE AT ISRAEL FROM BEHIND A UN SHIELD IS PARTICULARLY DISCONCERTING TO THE ISRAELIS. THEY FORESEE THE POSSIBILITY THAT PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS WILL INFILTRATE INTO ISRAEL THROUGH UN LINES, AND THE IDF WILL BE UNABLE TO STRIKE BACK BECAUSE OF UNIFIL. THE DAILY ROCKET AND ARTILLERY ATTACKS ON NORTHERN ISRAEL SINCE MARCH 15 HAVE HIGHLIGHTED THIS PROBLEM. THESE ATTACKS WERE LAUNCHED FROM NABATIYA AND TYRE, EVEN AFTER UN FORCES HAD ENTERED THE LATTER CITY. WEIZMAN WARNED YESTERDAY THAT THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT TOLERATE THE CONTINUED SHELLING OF NORTHERN ISRAEL. HE TOLD NORTHERN ISRAELIS TO GIVE THE FRENCH 48 HOURS TO STOP THE SHELLING. IF THE FIRING DOES NOT CEASE BY THAT TIME, HE SAID THAT THE IDF WOULD BE FORCED "TO TAKE MATTERS INTO HAND."

8. THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH IS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN/RIGHTIST MILITIAS. THESE FORCES DO NOT TRUST THE UN EITHER. THEY HAVE HAD STRAINED RELATIONS WITH THE UNMOS OVER THE LAST YEAR AND DO NOT WANT TO TURN THE DEFENSE OF THEIR HOMES OVER TO UNIFIL, WHICH THEY DOUBT WILL BE ABLE TO PROTECT THEM FROM PALESTINIAN RAIDS.

9. YESTERDAY, SAAD HADDAD, THE MOST IMPORTANT LEADER OF THESE FORCES, IN CONJUNCTION WITH SOME SHIITE LEADERS, ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF THE "ARMY OF SOUTH LEBANON." ALL LEBANESE BETWEEN 18 AND 45 WILL BE SUBJECT TO CONSCRIPTION. WE BELIEVE THAT THE ISRAELIS PROBABLY ENCOURAGED THIS MOVE; THEY HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT ONLY A LOCALLY CONSTITUTED ANTI-PALESTINIAN MILITIA COULD PREVENT THE REINTRODUCTION OF PLO FORCES INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON.

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10. THE POSSIBILITY IS THUS DEVELOPING IN WHICH, IN A NARROW, 30-MILE WIDE AREA OF LEBANON AND NORTHERN ISRAEL, FIVE MUTUALLY DISTRUSTFUL FORCES WILL BE REPRESENTED -- THE SYRIAN ADF, THE PALESTINIANS, UNIFIL, RIGHTIST MILITIAS AND, FINALLY, THE IDF. (SECRET)

11. SYRIA. A MAJOR CHANGE IN THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT WAS ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY. PRIME MINISTER KHULAFAWI, WHO WILL REMAIN IN OFFICE UNTIL HIS SUCCESSOR IS SWORN IN, WILL BE REPLACED. HOUSE SPEAKER HALABI HAS BEEN ASKED TO FORM THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THIS CHANGE WAS EXPECTED. MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE DEFENSE MINISTER TLASS AND FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM WILL RETAIN THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS. MORE

SURPRISING WAS THE APPOINTMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL SUBHI HADDAD AS COMMANDER OF THE AIR FORCE TO REPLACE NAJI JAMIL. JAMIL HAD BEEN A KEY ARCHITECT OF SYRIA'S LEBANON POLICY AND RUMORED AS A POSSIBLE CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER. (CONFIDENTIAL) COOPER

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